

I. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the work performed by the MLK @ Holly Street Planning Association during Phase II of the City of Seattle's neighborhood planning process. This program has been conducted with financial and staff support from the City of Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office and with technical assistance from consultants under contract to the Planning Association.

However, the Phase II neighborhood planning process has been, in essence, a volunteer, community-based effort." Scores of participants, including residents, business owners, employees, property owners, tenants, children, seniors, and institutional and organizational representatives have collaborated in this endeavor. The product is a shared vision which has been created by a broad cross-section of the community.

A. BACKGROUND

1. The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan Urban Village Strategy

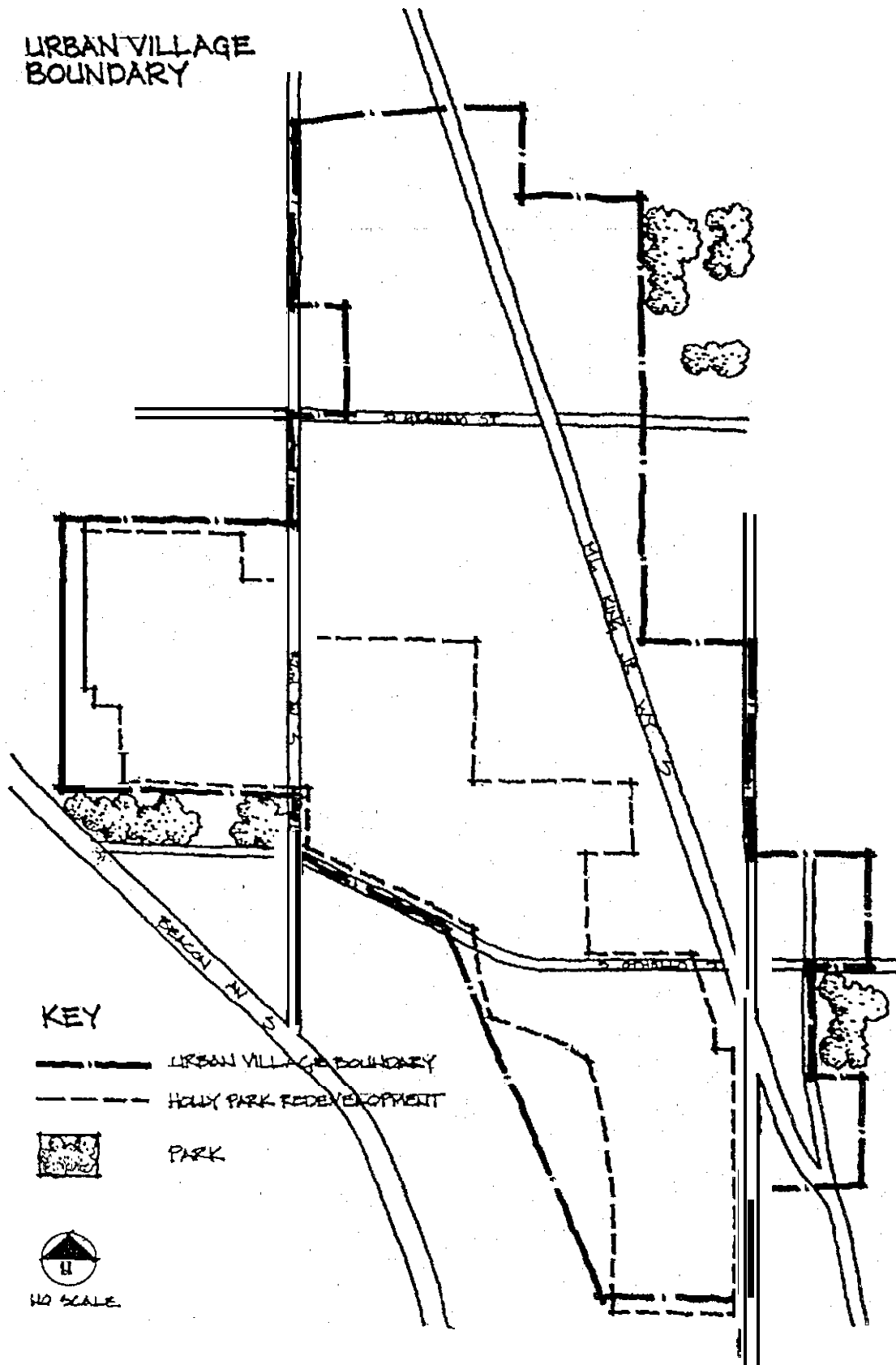
The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan is a policy plan that provides a flexible framework for adapting to conditions of change over the twenty year planning period. The building blocks of the Plan are the elements required by the Growth Management Act: land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, and utilities. The City of Seattle also included economic development, human development and neighborhood planning elements.

The component that unifies all the elements of the Comprehensive Plan is the Urban Centers and Villages Strategy. The Urban Centers and Villages concept is based upon the view that neighborhoods need to plan for sustainable development both locally and also within the context of larger regional growth trends and issues such as urban sprawl, transportation needs, and infrastructure costs. The objective of Urban Centers and Villages is to preserve the best qualities of Seattle's neighborhoods while responding to the pressures of growth and change.

The MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood is designated by the Comprehensive Plan as a Residential Urban Village. As defined by the Comprehensive Plan, the goal of a Residential Urban Villagers to:

...function primarily as a compact residential neighborhood providing opportunities for a wide range of housing types. While residential use is emphasized, a mix of other compatible activities, especially those that support residential uses, is appropriate. Employment activity is also appropriate to the extent that it does not conflict with the overall function and character residential of the village, provided that a different mix of uses may established through a neighborhood plan approved by the City Council. (Land Use Goal G26)

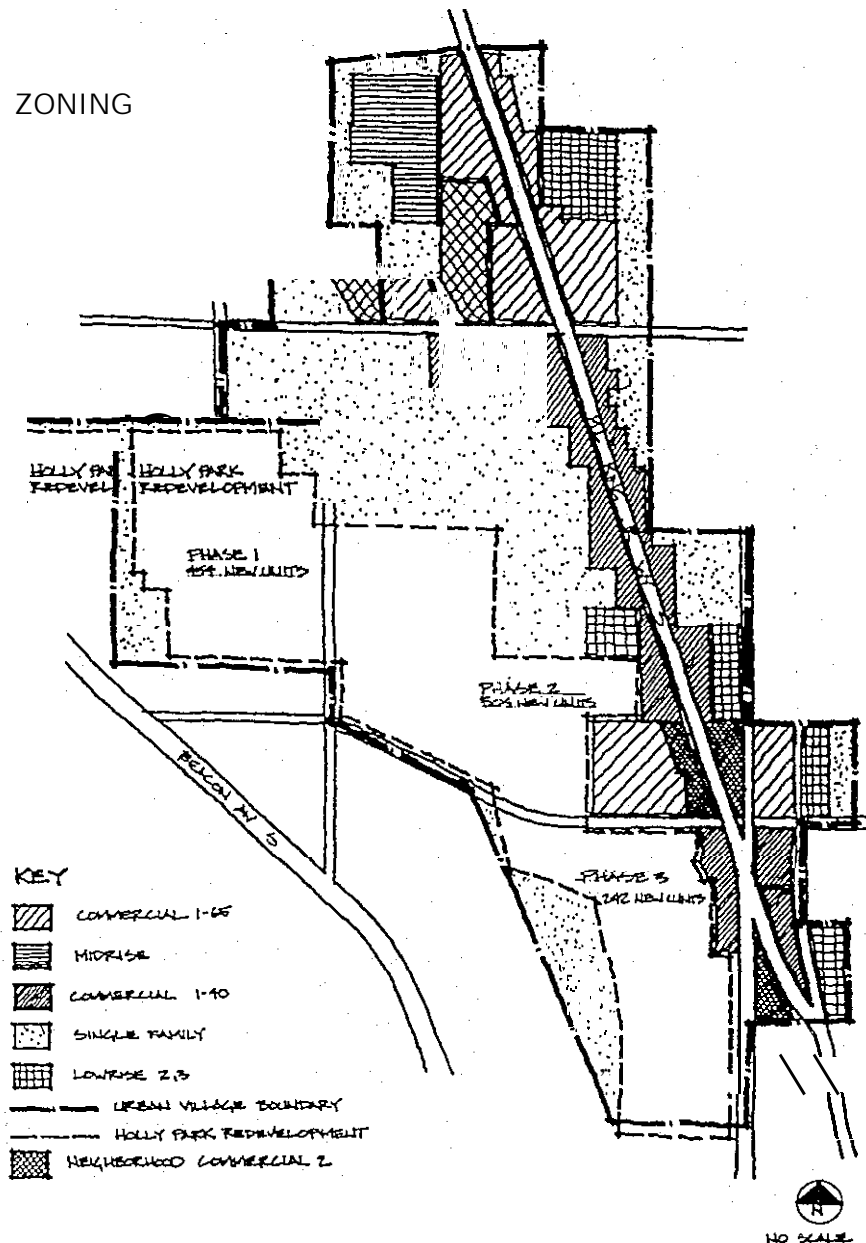
Based upon analyses of existing zoning, development capacity, capital facilities, infrastructure, transportation, utilities, and open space, the Comprehensive Plan proposed boundaries, population growth targets, and residential densities for the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village.



According to the Comprehensive Plan analyses, the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village is expected to grow by 800 new households by the year 2014. This Plan represents the MLK @ Holly Street community's preferred alternative for accommodating this population growth while preserving and enhancing the unique characteristics and quality of life of the neighborhood.

The MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village Plan will be submitted to the Seattle City Council for approval and adoption in September, 1998. Through this approval and adoption process, priorities, will be established for the implementation of City policies and programs and the allocation of resources for capital improvements in the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village.

ZONING



2. Seattle's Neighborhood **Planning** Program

The Seattle Comprehensive Plan provides the basic framework for guiding growth and development in the City of Seattle over the next twenty years. While the Plan focuses on regional growth management, it also emphasizes the need to support and improve the local conditions and characteristics of Seattle's neighborhoods. One of the main components of the city's comprehensive plan is the provision to allow community members to prepare their own Neighborhood Plans.

To address issues of growth in Seattle over a two decade period, the city developed the Urban Village Strategy discussed above. The Comprehensive Plan established guidelines for neighborhoods to develop their own plans to allow growth in ways that support and enhance a neighborhood's unique character, needs, and quality of life.

With the assistance of the Neighborhood Planning Office (NPO) and consultants, as needed, the City looked to the neighborhoods designated as Urban Centers and Urban Villages to envision a desired future for their communities and to create a plan to achieve it. The resulting neighborhood plans will help guide the City to deliver the desired support and services to these communities.

The neighborhood plan program follows a four-phase iterative process:

- **Pre-application:** Neighborhoods organize themselves, create an Organizing Committee, identify a fiscal agent, and prepare an application to the NPO consisting of a work plan, budget, and schedule for Phase I planning.
- **Phase I:** The Organizing Committee works to include the whole community in developing a vision for the future, identifying community issues, setting priorities for Phase II planning, preparing a Phase I and Phase II Scope of Work, and electing a Planning Committee to guide the preparation of the Phase II work program.
- **Phase II:** The Planning Committee carries out activities detailed in the Scope of Work, continues community outreach, develops goals, policies, and implementation strategies for community priorities, works with the city to analyze Problems and create solutions, coordinates with adjacent communities, and ensures community validation of the plan.
- **Phase III:** The Planning Committee coordinates and partners with City departments, agencies, community organizations, and stakeholders to ensure stewardship and implementation of the plan, including participation in subsequent planning processes that refine the plan recommendations.

B. THE MLK @ HOLLY STREET PLANNING PROCESS

1. Phase I

A community based planning organization for the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood began meeting in November of 1995. However, formal action on their Phase I project was initiated by the Holly Park Neighbors' Phase I application in January of 1996. While the group began with the title, "Organizing Committee," it soon voted to be referred to as the "Planning Association".

The primary objectives of Phase I were to allow the MLK @ Holly Street neighborhood to identify and scope community issues; to conduct outreach and education regarding the planning efforts within the community; to diversify and expand participation in the Planning Association; and to create a vision for the future of the community.

Extensive outreach to the community was performed during Phase I, including a neighborhood survey to identify planning issues and opportunities. Phase I culminated in a "Planning Party," which was held on February 1, 1997. In addition to attracting new people to the Planning Association, the Planning Party included numerous activities to identify and prioritize the issues and opportunities of greatest importance to the community.

Through a process of organizing these issues and opportunities into "clusters" of similarity, the Planning Association developed the primary work products of Phase I, including the following:

- . Vision Statement The MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood Vision Statement was developed by the Planning Association to guide the neighborhood planning process. It is the distillation of the community values and objectives that emerged during the Phase I process.
- . Key Planning Issues: A total of six (6) Key Issues were identified based upon community input. These Key Issues are the substantive areas to be addressed in the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood planning process. It is important to note that a seventh Key Issue of the Urban Village Designation was later added during Phase II as requested by the Neighborhood Planning Office.
- Community Objective: A Community Objective was developed for each of the Key Issues to document specific community concerns and intentions. These Community Objectives provided a placeholder of issues and opportunities for each of these substantive areas as the planning process moved forward.

The final Phase I work product was a Phase II Scope of Work, which was organized around the issue clusters that the Planning Association had developed. The six Key Planning Issues and Community Objectives were incorporated as elements within the scope. The Scope of Work provided the organizational structure and foundation for Phase II, the next iteration of the neighborhood planning process.

2. Phase II

A measure of the success of Phase I was the energy and enthusiasm of the Planning Association during the development of the Phase II Scope of Work. The result was an ambitious Scope of Work that proposed separate planning committees and planning processes for each of the Key Issues.

One of the basic precepts of the City of Seattle's neighborhood planning process is that the Organizing Committee, or the Planning Association as it was called in this community, would be replaced by a Steering Committee to oversee the project through Phases II and into implementation. The Steering Committee should be comprised of members that broadly represent the diverse stakeholders of the community.

The Planning Association determined that the MLK at Holly Street Steering Committee would be headed by an Executive Committee with a co-chairpersons, a treasurer, secretary, and administrative assistant.

The Phase II Work Plan proposed that the six Key Issue groups, along with a recruitment and outreach work group, would be addressed by specific committees with individual work plans and planning processes. The committees would be comprised of members of the community from the representative stakeholder groups, including seniors, high schools, S. E.E.D., Rainier Chamber of Commerce, Rainier Lions, arts, Holly Park Merchants' Association, churches, social service agencies, language experts, and the Rainier Rotary Club.

In addition, the Work Plan proposed that a Round Table would be established in an effort to communicate with the surrounding neighborhoods. The Round Table would allow for informal gatherings of any interested parties and would provide for social contact with adjoining neighborhood groups.

After extensive consultation with the Neighborhood Planning Office, the Executive Committee determined that this organizational structure was too cumbersome and resource intensive to be successful in the MLK @ Holly Street community. Because of the limited history of neighborhood planning in this community, the Planning Association did not have the organizational capacity to manage such an ambitious Phase II program.

Residents of this neighborhood face significant challenges to participation in community based planning processes. Foremost among these challenges are the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community. Over sixty six (66) languages and dialects and seventy two (72) religions are represented in the neighborhood, and a significant proportion of residents are recent immigrants. Additional challenges include high levels of poverty and the transitional nature of the MLK @ Holly Street neighborhood.

The Executive Committee revised the Phase H planning process in an attempt to accommodate these challenges, minimize meeting requirements, and expedite the development of the Plan.

The result was a series of "Neighborhood Planning Work Sessions" that would allow all six Key Issue committees to meet at one time and operate simultaneously. Each committee would be facilitated by a consultant, who would assist the committee to organize and carry forward the work that had been done during Phase I.

Because of concerns regarding the time requirements for Planning Association volunteers and the ability to staff two additional committees, the recruitment and outreach group and the Round Table were eliminated. The Executive Committee determined that these functions would most efficiently be accomplished by the individual Key Issue committees.

After extensive outreach to the community to promote the Work Sessions, a Phase II Kick Off Meeting was held on January 26, 1998. The meeting was attended by more than twenty (20) people. The purpose of this meeting was to review the Phase I findings and work products with new and returning Planning Association members, introduce the revised Phase II Work Plan and planning process, organize the Planning Association into Key Issue committees, and demonstrate the format that would be used in future Work Sessions.

The Planning Association continued to perform community outreach to increase participation in the Work Session process. With the assistance of an outreach consultant, there were several one-on-one meetings and telephone calls to current or potential stakeholders averaging forty (40) weekly contacts. However, it became apparent that there would not be sufficient community participation to sustain six Key Issue committees simultaneously.

Therefore, the format of the Work Sessions was, modified in response to lower levels of participation. In lieu of six committees operating simultaneously, the Key Issues would be worked on individually with one facilitated group. This would allow all the participants to contribute to each of the Key Issues and allow for a broader cross-section of input regarding the Key Issues,

Work Session One was held on February 7, 1998, and was attended by twenty five (25) people. This meeting focused on Land Use and Housing and Public Safety. For both of these Key Issues, the Phase I findings provided a starting point for discussion. Through facilitated discussion, each of the findings was developed more fully. A series of facilitation questions allowed for the community to clarify and elaborate on the findings and to propose solutions to the findings.

Work Session Two was held on February 23, 1998, and was attended by twenty five (25) people. This meeting focused on Economic Development and Transportation. The format of the facilitated discussion of these Key Issues was the same as that used for Work Session One.

Because of the low participation level in these two Work Sessions, the Executive Committee determined that an alternative meeting format and planning process was necessary. As a result, the decision was made to cancel the third scheduled Work Session after consultation with the Neighborhood Planning Office.

At this time, the Executive Committee also determined that in order to develop a plan that would provide the sufficient detail and analysis necessary for implementation, it would prioritize two of the Key Issues. Consistent with this decision, the planning process was revised to focus on the Land Use and Housing and Economic Development Key Issues.

In order to complete the development of the Key Issues, the Executive Committee held a Work Session on March 16, 1998. This meeting focused on Community Image and Appearance and Coordination of Community Ideas. It followed the same format as the previous Work Sessions.

Utilizing the community input and information that was presented at the three Neighborhood Planning Work Sessions, the Planning Association developed Draft Goals and Policies and Draft Recommendations for the Residential Urban Village Plan. The result was the development of seven "clusters" of Plan Recommendations. The Goals and Policies and Recommendations form the core of the Residential Urban Village Plan and are discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

In conjunction with the development of the Draft Goals and Policies and Draft Recommendations, the Planning Association organized a Panel Discussion with City and Agency staff. The objectives of the Panel Discussion were to receive input and responses from the organizations represented, to bring additional technical resources to the Phase II process, and to develop additional implementation strategies.

The Panel Discussion was held on April 27, 1998, and was attended by thirty (30), community members. A broad cross-section of City departments and agencies participated in the Panel Discussion, including the following:

- City of Seattle Strategic Planning Office;
- City of Seattle Office of Economic Development;
- City of Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office;
- City of Seattle Department of Transportation (SEATLAN);
- City of Seattle Department of Housing and Human Services (DHHS);
- City of Seattle Department of Construction and Land Use (DCLU);
- Seattle Neighborhood Group;
- Sound Transit/Regional Transit Authority;
- Seattle Housing Authority/Holly Park Redevelopment;
- Fannie Mae;
- Washington State Housing Finance Commission;
- * Southeast Effective Development (SEED); and
- Rainier Chamber of Commerce,

The format of the Panel Discussion was an interactive, facilitated discussion among the panelists and Planning Association members regarding the Preliminary Recommendations. The

discussion focused on existing resources, planned resources, and information requirements for implementation. The agenda was structured to address all of the seven clusters of Plan Recommendations. However, consistent with the previous decision of the Executive Committee, the discussion focused on those recommendations that addressed the Land Use and Housing and Economic Development Key Issues.

Using the input and information that was presented at the Panel Discussion, the Preliminary Recommendations were further refined by the Planning Association and their consultants. Consistent with the requirements of the Neighborhood Planning Office, the Preliminary Recommendations were presented to the City of Seattle Neighborhood planning Review and Response Team on May 22, 1998.

An Alternatives Fair was held by the Planning Association on June 8, 1998, to review and prioritize the Preliminary Recommendations. The Alternatives Fair was attended by thirty (30) community members. Following presentations of the seven clusters of Plan Recommendations, community members were first asked to rank the individual recommendations within each cluster. The community members were then asked to rank the seven clusters of Plan Recommendations.

The rankings were compiled by the Planning Association. The prioritization of the Plan Recommendations of the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village Plan reflects and are consistent with these community preferences.

C. THE PLAN

1. Level of Detail

As discussed above, the neighborhood planning process for the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood was forced to continually adapt to conditions of low community participation. Although extensive efforts were made to perform outreach and education to increase the membership of the Planning Association and participation in the planning process, it must be acknowledged that these efforts did not translate directly into quantifiable results.

This planning area is comprised of many recent immigrants from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Challenges to participation in community planning processes in the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood include rim-English speaking individuals; low levels of literacy; low levels of home and business ownership; and high levels of poverty, unemployment and economic distress. These factors are well documented to have high correlation with low participation rates.

Participation is the most powerful resource available to community planning efforts. Therefore, it must be acknowledged that the organizational capacity of the Planning Association has not been fully realized because of limited participation resources.

As a result, the Plan Recommendations could not be developed to the level of detail that would have been possible with large scale participation. Consistent with the direction of the Executive Committee, the resources available to the Planning Association have been allocated to focus on the issues of greatest importance to the community.

As discussed below, many critical decisions regarding the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood are the subject of ongoing planning processes. This has also effected the level of detail that was possible to develop in the Residential Urban Village Plan. Rather than to fully develop recommendations that may not be feasible, Plan Recommendations that involve ongoing or future planning processes are intended to serve as placeholders for consideration during subsequent decision making.

The community members who did participate must be commended for their involvement in the planning process. The input and information that community members provided during Phase II was unsurpassed in quality and presented with passion and respect. The Plan Recommendations are a direct product of their input and area reflection of their concern for the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood.

2. Subsequent Planning Processes

The MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood is not a “traditional” or “organic” Seattle neighborhood, like Columbia City, Georgetown, Wallingford, Ballard, or West Seattle Junction. Despite their differences, these neighborhoods share certain attributes, such as a sense of place, definable character, an identifiable core, and recognized boundaries.

MLK @ Holly Street does not share these attributes of a traditional neighborhood. It does not have an established history as a neighborhood. It was created as a Residential Urban Village by the Comprehensive Plan because it met certain land use, infrastructure and capital facility criteria. It is actually comprised of portions of several traditional neighborhoods, including Brighton, Dunlap, and Beacon Hill, and the Seattle Housing Authority’s Holly Park Garden Community.

[n this sense, the Residential Urban Village Plan is intended to develop these traditional neighborhood attributes, to begin to define the “hole in the doughnut.”

However, in addition to the City of Seattle’s neighborhood planning process, the area that comprises MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village has been the focus of multiple large scale planning efforts in recent years. Most prominent among these planning processes are the following:

- The Holly Park Redevelopment Plan by the Seattle Housing Authority, which proposes to demolish S71 public housing units and to replace these units with 1,200 units of mixed income housing for rent and home-ownership,

- . Light Rail System and Station Planning by Sound Transit, which proposes to provide serve light rail service and to develop a station within the MLK @ Holly Street Neighborhood.
- . The Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies (NRS) by the Seattle Office of Economic Development, which proposes to develop and implement comprehensive economic empowerment actions within Southeast Seattle.

These planning efforts provide tremendous opportunities to help to define the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village as more than simply an aggregation of Comprehensive Plan criteria. Because of this unprecedented commitment of public resources, the opportunity exists to create a sense of place, definable character, an identifiable core, and recognized boundaries in this neighborhood while preserving the fragile diversity that makes it unique.

However, these planning processes are overlapping in sequence and timeframe for implementation. As a result, there is a high degree of uncertainty regarding the details of the resulting projects. In this sense, to continue the metaphor, not only is the hole in the doughnut undefined, but the doughnut recipe is still under development.

Given these conditions of uncertainty, many of the Plan Recommendations are intended to serve as placeholders for subsequent planning processes to ensure that community objectives are factored into the decision making. Much of the supporting detail and analysis to determine the feasibility and design of these recommendations will be generated With Planning Association participation during these subsequent planning processes.

Because of the central importance of subsequent planning processes to determining the future of this neighborhood, it is impossible to overstate the importance of community stewardship and active partnerships between the community, the City, agencies, and other stakeholders to the implementation of the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village Plan.

3. Plan Organization

The MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village Plan is organized in a hierarchy of components. Moving down through the hierarchy provides increasing levels of detail and specificity regarding how to the plan should be implemented. Moving up through the hierarchy provides increasing levels of amplitude and comprehensiveness regarding why the plan should be implemented.

The following matrix summarizes the organization of the MLK @ Holly Street Residential Urban Village Plan.

Chapter	Component	Discussion
Two	<i>Vision Statement</i>	At the top of the hierarchy is the most generalized component of the Plan, the Vision Statement. The Vision Statement summarizes the community principles and values upon which the Plan is based.
	<i>Community Objectives</i>	The Community Objectives document specific community concerns and intentions for each of the Key Planning Issues.
	<i>Goals</i>	The Goals are general statements of the community's desired future end or condition and provide a general direction for the community. The Goals are organized according to the Key Planning Issues.
	<i>Policies</i>	The Policies are more specific processes or guidelines for achieving the individual Goals of the Plan. In essence, the Policies implement the Goals.
Three	<i>Recommendations</i>	The Recommendations are the specific projects or programs necessary to implement the Goals and Policies. There are three (3) general categories of Recommendations based upon community priorities and timeframes for implementation. These categories of Recommendations are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.
Four		Chapter Four addresses how community members can become involved in Plan review, validation, approval and adoption, and implementation.